

As Biden border crackdown/war bill collapses

# Republican bid to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas fails

Jacob Crosse  
7 February 2024

In a 214-216 vote Tuesday evening, four House Republicans joined the Democrats to vote against impeaching Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas. While a close vote was anticipated, due to the very narrow majority held by the Republicans in the House, the defeat of the impeachment resolution seemed to come as something of a shock to Trump-aligned House Speaker Mike Johnson.

The vote came after months of partisan hearings in which Republicans charged Mayorkas and President Joe Biden of deliberately engineering an “invasion” of the country by “illegal aliens” by failing to enforce existing immigration laws.

Republican Reps. Mike Gallagher (Wisconsin), Tom McClintock (California), Ken Buck (Colorado) and Blake Moore (Utah) joined 212 House Democrats in rejecting the impeachment charges against Mayorkas. Moore was originally a “yes” vote but changed his vote for procedural reasons so as to allow the Republicans to bring up the measure again.

In a letter distributed to Republicans before the vote, Rep. McClintock warned that impeaching Mayorkas would establish an “expansive view of impeachment” that would later be used against conservatives on the Supreme Court “or a future Republican president.”

Mayorkas had defended his record as secretary of the agency that oversees US immigration and the border police by boasting that under his watch the Biden administration had “removed, returned, or expelled more migrants in three years than the prior Administration did in four years.”

Following the vote, Rep. Buck, who last week became the first Republican in the House to come out against impeachment, reiterated his opposition, telling ABC News reporters: “Mayorkas has not committed a high crime or misdemeanor. There is a policy difference ... he’s not doing a lot of the things that would alleviate the crisis, but those are policy differences, not a crime, or something akin to a crime.”

While it was known before the vote that McClintock and Buck were opposed, the “no” vote from Wisconsin Rep. Mike Gallagher was unexpected. Like all Republicans, Gallagher routinely attacks immigrants. On Monday, he introduced legislation calling for \$25 billion to finish building Trump’s border wall.

In a statement released by his press office after the vote, Gallagher attacked Mayorkas for implementing “Biden’s open border policies” but argued that “proponents of impeachment failed to make the argument as to how his stunning incompetence meets the impeachment threshold Republicans outlined while defending former President Trump.”

Citing the 2019 and 2021 impeachments of Trump as “rushed, hyperpartisan” processes, Gallagher said Republicans should reject the “Pelosi precedent” and “Pandora’s box of perpetual impeachment.”

While Tuesday’s vote failed, Republicans have vowed to bring the charges against Mayorkas up again for another vote, possibly as early as next week. Speaking after the vote, Georgia fascist Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene predicted that a second vote in the House to

impeach Mayorkas would pass. “We have a plan in place, there was motion to recommit, and that means we can bring the articles of impeachment back to the floor as early as next week. So this is not over yet,” Greene said.

She pointed to the absence on Tuesday of Rep. Steve Scalise, who is currently undergoing cancer treatment, and also suggested that pressure from constituents would compel current Republican “no” voters to change their mind.

“Several of our members have to think about things over the weekend,” Greene told reporters. Referring specifically to Rep. Gallagher, Greene said, “He’s got a full weekend to hear from his constituents. Hopefully it will become a lot more clear.”

Since the vote, Gallagher’s social media accounts have been inundated with fascist threats and insults, accusing him of being a “traitor” and “pedophile.”

After the vote, White House spokesperson Ian Sams released a statement calling the impeachment a “stunt” and a “waste of time.” The White House urged House Republicans to “join the President, Secretary Mayorkas, and Republicans and Democrats who want to work together to deliver real solutions that actually strengthen border security.”

Mayorkas played a critical role in bipartisan negotiations in the Democratic-controlled US Senate that produced a proposed deal to gut asylum rights and increase detentions and removals of immigrants in the hope of winning sufficient Republican support to pass President Biden’s \$120 billion supplemental bill to pour another \$60 billion into the US-NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine, as well as billions more in military aid to Israel and Taiwan.

The Senate leaders’ proposal would include in the war supplemental bill \$20 billion to increase the number of border police and immigration agents and give the president new authority to shut down the border. The repressive and right-wing character of the bill, giving the Republicans “most of what they wanted” in attacking refugees, in the words of Democratic supporters of the measure, prompted Trump-aligned border police union head Brandon Judd,

the Editorial Board of the *Wall Street Journal*, and the US Chamber of Commerce to support the bill.

Nevertheless, the bill appears dead after over a dozen Senate Republicans confirmed their opposition to it on Tuesday, including Marsha Blackburn (Tennessee), Ted Budd (North Carolina), Bill Hagerty (Tennessee), Tom Cotton (Arkansas), Ted Cruz (Texas), Josh Hawley (Missouri), Ron Johnson (Wisconsin), Marco Rubio (Florida), Rick Scott (Florida), Eric Schmitt (Missouri), Tommy Tuberville (Alabama) and JD Vance (Ohio).

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, a strong supporter of the bill, declared it dead on Tuesday, telling reporters, “We had a very robust discussion about whether or not this product could ever become law. And it’s been made pretty clear to us by the speaker [House Speaker Mike Johnson] that it will not become law.”

In remarks from the White House on Tuesday, Biden agreed with Republicans that the immigration system was “broken” and championed the “bipartisan” Senate border crackdown proposal as the “most fair, humane reform to our immigration system in a long time and the toughest set of reforms to the border ever.”

In his comments, Biden attacked the Republicans for kowtowing to Trump’s demands to kill the bill. “He,” referring to Trump, “would rather weaponize this issue than solve it,” Biden said.

At the same time, Biden demanded “artillery shells” and “air defense systems” for the war against Russia. “We can’t walk away now,” he said, adding, “Supporting this bill is standing up to Putin, opposing this bill is playing into his hands.”



To contact the WSWWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**